

WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE BEVERAGE SERVICE (RBS) TRAINING?

INFORMATION INCLUDED IN SERVER TRAINING INCLUDES:

- The importance of checking age identification of customers who appear under age 30.
- How to identify fake IDs and what to do once false identification is confiscated.
- How to recognize situations in which adults are buying alcohol for underage youth.
- How to refuse sales to individuals who may supply alcohol to underage youth.
- How to identify customers who are intoxicated.
- How to refuse service to underage youth and intoxicated customers.

Roadside surveys show that 30 to 50 percent of drivers on the road who have been drinking are coming from bars and restaurants. To decrease the probability that patrons of licensed establishments will drink to excess, management policies have been developed that include:

- prohibiting reduced-price drinks
- providing food and non-alcoholic beverages
- avoiding overcrowding
- teaching service techniques that recognize signs of intoxication and slow or refuse service to patrons who may be intoxicated.



The goal of RBS is to decrease the number of illegal alcohol sales to underage youth and intoxicated patrons through education programs that

- help managers and servers/sellers understand state, community, and establishment-level alcohol policies and potential consequences for failing to comply with such policies (e.g., criminal or civil liability, job loss, etc.)
- provide the necessary skills to comply with these policies.

THE SITUATION IN KENTUCKY

As of yet, Kentucky has no statewide legislation addressing this issue, though server training is required if licensees have been cited and are requesting a reduction in or suspension of the fine and/or down time. The Alcohol Beverage Control Board provides

Responsible Beverage Service training through their own program, which is called S.T.A.R. (Server Training in Alcohol Regulations). Also, establishments may obtain RBS training through the TIPS (Training for

Intervention Procedures) program, the leading national server training program for retailers and servers. Cities such as Georgetown, Danville, and Bowling Green have passed mandatory Responsible Beverage Service training ordi-

THERE ARE TWO OPTIONAL RBS ORDINANCES

1. Mandatory responsible beverage service training

requires everyone involved in the selling and serving of alcoholic beverages to participate in an approved training program related to preventing alcohol sales to underage individuals.

2. Incentive-based responsible beverage server training allows a reduction in liquor license fees and/or liability insurance to those licensees who require employees to undergo a city-approved server training course.

The licensee also must agree to maintain certain documents on-site, post signage related to underage drinking, and allow a city-approved security agency to make periodic investigations of their licensed business, including unannounced, random attempts to buy alcohol by underage persons.

WHAT RESEARCH SHOWS

Research has established that RBS programs are effective. A 1991 survey reported that a six-hour program delivered to servers and managers in 100 licensed establishments resulted in interventions by servers in 20 percent of cases where a patron appeared to be intoxicated; seven percent of these cases resulted in termination of service.

In the same study, enforcement of laws against service to intoxicated patrons saw a rise in refusals of service to patrons who

appeared intoxicated from 17.5 percent to 54.3 percent and a corresponding decline in the proportion of arrested impaired drivers coming from bars and restaurants.

Other studies show that these programs result in more responsible server practices, such as slowing service of alcohol and offering non-alcoholic beverages and food. Customers of sellers/server who had received Responsible Beverage

Service training were more likely to have lower BAC levels, and traffic crashes declined. The state of Oregon mandated training for all servers of alcoholic beverages in 1986 and experienced a 23 percent drop in alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities attributable to the training program three years later. Researchers have concluded that training and active involvement of managers is particularly vital to the success of server training policies.

WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE

By the year 2000, 21 of the United States had enacted statewide server training laws. These were mandatory in 11 states and permissive in 10. Mandatory Responsible Beverage Service training laws have been enacted in the following states:

Tennessee	Maryland
Wisconsin	Delaware
Alaska	New Jersey
Utah	Oregon
Vermont	Washington
New Mexico	



States with permissive RBS laws include:

Arizona	Texas
Arkansas	Louisiana
Alabama	Florida
Maine	New Hampshire

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ISSUE: RBS programs may appear to be too costly for an establishment.

RESPONSE: Some communities decrease the license fees for those establishments that implement RBS programs, thereby partly offsetting the cost of training. In addition, many insurance companies give discounts on liability insurance, as much as 5 to 20%, for outlets with server training programs.

ISSUE: Without management training and support, changes in server or seller behavior are unlikely to be sustained.

RESPONSE: Managers of alcohol outlets should be required to participate in responsible beverage service training along with servers and sellers. Managers who support responsible beverage service provide an atmosphere that makes adhering to RBS rules easier for employees.

ISSUE: Some practices, such as allowing underage youth to enter the premises, may make reducing youth access to alcohol more difficult for alcohol servers or sellers.

RESPONSE: Outlets can be encouraged to evaluate existing policies and practices in terms of their effect on alcohol sales to underage youth and intoxicated customers. Kentucky law does not allow anyone under age 21 to enter a bar.

ISSUE: Because of high staff turnover in many establishments, owners and managers need to develop an on-going system to train new employees.

RESPONSE: An establishment may want to employ an in-house trainer to reduce the costs of on-going server training. At the very least, an establishment should have in place the following practices to ensure that new employees have guidelines for responsible serving practices if they cannot be trained immediately upon being hired:

- Managers who have received RBS training.
 - Clear, written policies concerning serving practices of which employees are made aware and which are consistently enforced.
 - A monitoring system to ensure that all employees are adhering to responsible serving practices
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ISSUE: An establishment may be concerned about how to obtain RBS training for their employees.

RESPONSE: RBS training can be obtained from several sources. Kentucky's Alcohol Beverage Control Board provides RBS training through their own program called Server Training in Alcohol Regulations (S.T.A.R.). Some outlets arrange training through local community colleges or through the police department. Outlets also can hire local RBS trainers, which may save money and ensure on-going RBS training. Professional companies also offer training programs, as do many Regional Prevention Centers. When RBS is not mandated through a specific training program, alcohol merchants should decide what their goals for RBS training are and negotiate with the chosen RBS trainer to create a program that best meets the needs and goals of their establishments.